



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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Westwego man arrested for fraud pertaining to waste tire program

BATON ROUGE – Today, investigators within the Criminal Investigation Division of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality arrested a waste tire transporter from Westwego on a felony count of submitting a document containing a false certification to the department.

Andre Franklin, 55, is alleged to have submitted a waste tire manifest to DEQ that contained a false certification. Under Louisiana law, tire dealerships have the responsibility to register with the department and collect a fee for each tire that is replaced on a vehicle.

The fee on the sale of a tire is collected by the retail tire dealership and remitted the department to be deposited into the Louisiana waste tire management fund. This fund is used to reimburse waste tire processors for converting the eligible waste tires into usable material that is approved by the department for a beneficial end-use market. The collection, transportation and processing of eligible waste tires is regulated utilizing a manifest system.

According to the information gathered throughout the investigation, Franklin allegedly collected over 700 ineligible waste tires from a separate site in April 2008 and submitted a false waste tire manifest to the Department claiming that over 700 eligible waste tires were generated from his business in Westwego, Louisiana.

Filing false public records containing a false representation of material fact is a felony under Title 14 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes. If convicted of the crime of filing false public records, Franklin faces possible imprisonment for not more than five years with or without hard labor, or a fine of not more than \$5 thousand, or both.

“The Criminal enforcement of waste tire fraud is essential to maintaining the integrity of the Louisiana waste tire program which sustains a level playing field for the honest private enterprise.” DEQ Undersecretary Vince Sagnibene.

An arrest does not constitute guilt in a criminal case. All evidence compiled during the investigation is presented to the area prosecutors who determine if formal charges are warranted.